

On some Newly-recorded Corals from the Indian Seas, by A. ALCOCK, M.B., C.M.Z.S., Officiating Superintendent of the Indian Museum.

Plate V.

[Received May 22nd, Read June 7th].

As so little has been written about the coral fauna of the seas within the limits of the Indian peninsulas, the following account of the corals dredged in recent years by the "Investigator," and by the late Professor Wood-Mason, may be of interest.

No reference is made in this paper to the true reef-forming corals.

FAMILY TURBINOLIDÆ.

FLABELLUM, Lesson.

1. *Flabellum stokesi*, Edw. & Haime, Moseley.

Flabellum stokesi, *Flabellum oweni*, *Flabellum aculeatum*, *Flabellum spinosum*, all of Milne-Edwards and Haime, Hist. Nat. des Coralliaires, vol. ii. pp. 96, 87 and 88.

Flabellum variabile, Semper, Z. Wiss. Zool., vol. xxii, 1872, p. 245.

Flabellum stokesi, Moseley, Challenger Deep-sea Madreporaria, p. 172.

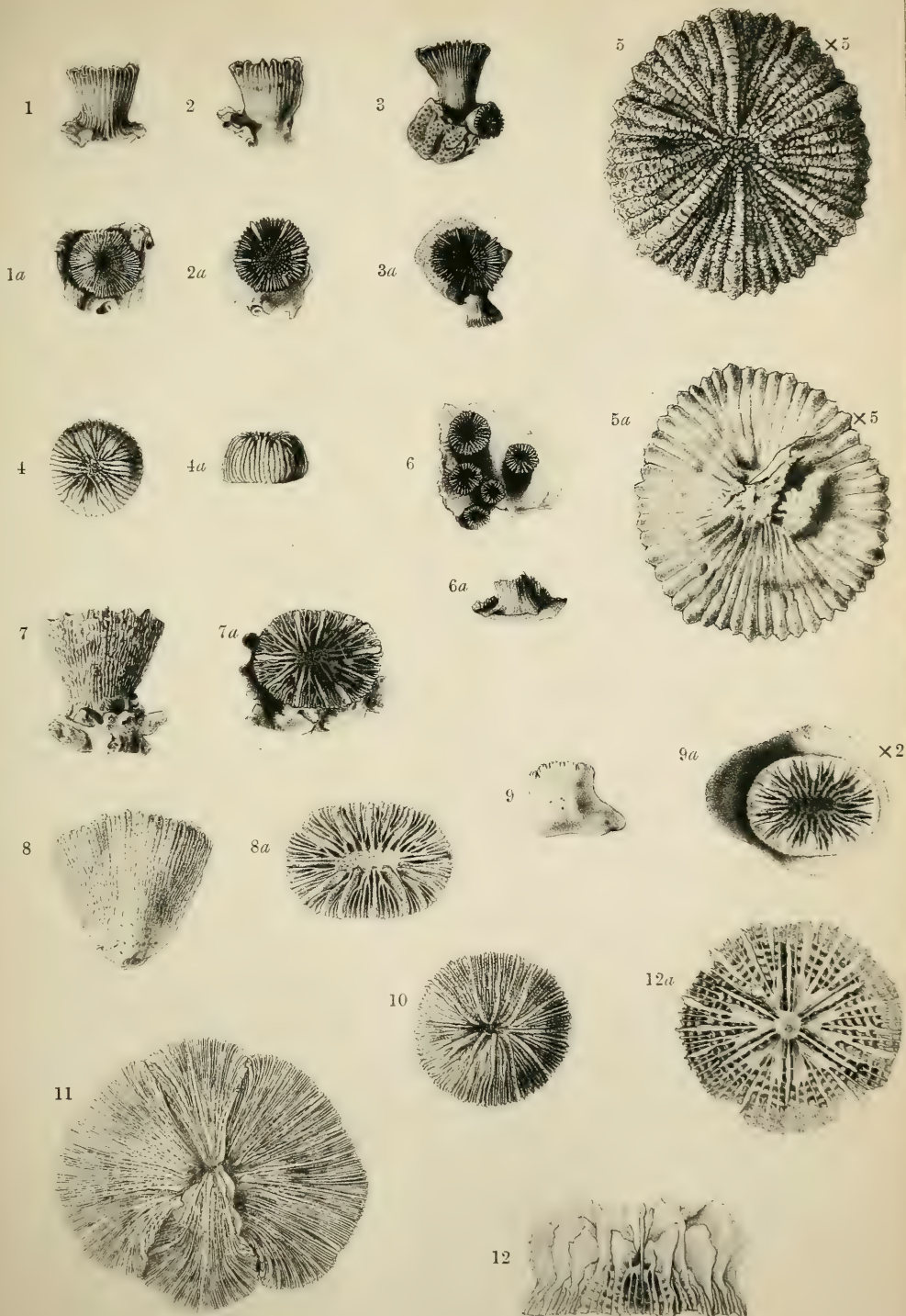
This species, not hitherto recorded in the Indian Fauna, is common from Ceylon, along the east coast of India, to the Andaman Islands, at depths of from 20 to 30 fathoms. The numerous specimens dredged by Professor Wood-Mason in the Andaman Sea, and by the "Investigator" elsewhere, fully bear out Professor Semper's views as to the identity of all the four species of MM. Milne-Edwards and Haime above-cited. Undoubtedly Professor Semper's name for the species is very appropriate; but, as Professor Moseley says, it is necessary to retain one of the original names, and he has selected the specific designation *stokesi* as being least likely to lead to error.

ACANTHOCYATHUS, Edw. & Haime.

2. *Acanthocyathus grayi*, Edw. & Haime.

Acanthocyathus grayi, Milne-Edwards and Haime, Hist. Nat. des Corall., vol. ii. p. 22.

This species was described by MM. Milne-Edwards and Haime as of "patrie inconnue;" I have little hesitation in identifying with it a single specimen dredged by Professor Wood-Mason in the Andaman Sea.



PARACYATHUS, Edw. & Haime.

3. *Paracyathus indicus*, Duncan, var. nov. *gracilis*. Vide Duncan, Journ. Linn. Soc., Zool., vol xxi. 1889, p. 3.

The type of this species, which was brought by Dr. Anderson from Mergui, is in the Indian Museum, and I have now to record a distinct variety from the Bombay coast. This variety is characterized by its greater delicacy, and by the form of the corallum, which is subturbinate with a long slender pedicle.

4. *Paracyathus cavatus*, n. sp. Pl. V figs. 1. 1a., very near *Paracyathus crassus*, Edw. & Haime.

Corallum with a broad encrusting base, gently expanding into a low, slightly curved, sub-circular calice.

Costæ distinct from the basal encrustment, finely and distantly granular, every alternate one conspicuously salient.

Calice sub-circular, open, deep: the marginal axes in the same plane.

The finely and distantly granular septa are in five incomplete crowded cycles, and do not project far into the calice; those of the first three cycles are exsert. Those of the incomplete fifth cycle are small, and unite with those of the fourth cycle just below the calicular margin, while those of the fourth cycle unite with those of the third deep down in the calyx. The pali are in the form of numerous strong salient and very regular denticulations of the septal margins,—excluding those of the last cycle: those of the primary septa are much the most distinct, not because they are larger but because they are isolated.

The columella is very small, deeply-seated and concave, consisting of numerous minute close-set papillæ.

The tips of the septa are coloured pale madder-brown.

Greatest height of corallum 9 mm., major diameter of calice 11 mm., minor diameter of calice 10 mm., diameter of basal constriction 7 mm.

From the Persian Gulf.

The species is characterized by the very distinct alternately-salient costæ, by the deep hollow calice into which the septa project but little, and by the isolation of the series of strong paliform teeth opposite the septa of the first cycle.

5. *Paracyathus fulvus*, n. sp. Plate V, figs. 2. 2a., near *Paracyathus crassus*, Edw. & H.

Corallum low, with an extensively encrusting base, and a short stout gently curved cylindrical peduncle which expands gradually into a circular slightly drooping calice.

Costæ indistinct at the base but gradually becoming distinct near

the margin of the calicle, where they are broad, finely granular and in all respects uniform.

The circular calice is open and moderately deep, with the marginal axes on the same plane.

The septa, which are in six systems, are exsert, with blunted slightly crenulated edges and distantly granular surfaces. Those of the first cycle are particularly distinct, being larger and stouter than those of any of the other cycles, projecting more into the calicle, and being more exsert beyond the margin. The quaternaries unite with the tertiaries near the columella. The pali have the form of stout granular pinnacles in three crowns, decreasing in size from without inwards, before all the septa but those of the last cycle.

The columella is small circular and slightly concave, and consists of numerous crowded granules.

In the type specimen the height of the corallum is 12·5 mm., the diameter of the calice 10·5 mm., and the diameter of the peduncle 7 mm.

The septa and pali are of a permanent tawny-brown colour.

The specimens in the Museum came from the telegraph cable in the Persian Gulf.

The distinctive characters of this species are the marked predominance of the primary septa, and the definition and regularity of the pali.

6. *Paracyathus porphyreus*, n. sp. Plate V, figs. 3. 3a, near *Paracyathus pulchellus*, Edw. & H.

Corallum with an encrusting base, above which it is suddenly constricted to again gradually expand into a slightly drooping, turbinate calice.

Costæ distinct from the base, equal, finely granular, depressed.

The calice is slightly elliptical, with marginal axes almost on the same plane: it is deep, but its cavity is about two-thirds filled by the septa.

The septa, which are crowded and exsert, are in four complete cycles in the young, with an incomplete fifth cycle in older examples: they have sharp and slightly crenulated edges and coarsely granular surfaces: those of the first two cycles are the most exsert: those of the fourth cycle unite with those of the third deep down in the calice behind the outer crown of pali.

The pali, which are in two crowns, are tall and large, those which stand opposite the tertiary septa being much the largest: the two crowns of pali, as seen from above, form a broad ring within the calice, very distinctly delimited both from the septa and from the columella.

The very deeply seated columella is large and concave, and consists of numerous close-set, blunt pinnacles.

In the type specimen the height of the corallum is 11·5 mm., the major diameter of the calice 10 mm. and the minor diameter 8 mm., and the diameter of the pedicle 5 mm.

The septa, pali and columella are of a dull purple-black colour.

Dredged off the Arrakan Coast by the "Investigator:."

The distinctive characters of this species are (1) the delicacy of the calice wall in comparison with the stoutness of the septa and pali, (2) the large size of the pali and the very distinct definition of the palar zone, and (3) the punched-out appearance of the deep-seated columella.

HETEROCYATHUS, Edw. & Haime.

7. *Heterocyathus æquicostatus*, Edw. & Haime.

Heterocyathus æquicostatus, Milne-Edwards and Haime, Hist. Nat. des Corall., vol. ii, p. 51.

Numerous specimens were dredged by Professor Wood-Mason in the Andaman Sea. Every specimen has the base perforated and tunnelled for the residence of a worm, which no doubt lives as a commensal with the coral zoophyte, as I shall be able to show in the parallel case of *Heteropsammia*.

8. *Heterocyathus philippensis*, Semper.

Heterocyathus philippensis, Semper, Zeitschr. Wiss. Zool., vol. xxii 1872, p. 254, taf. xx. figs. 12-14.

Two specimens were dredged by Professor Wood-Mason in the Andaman Sea.

9. *Heterocyathus wood-masoni*, n. sp. Plate V, figs. 4. 4a.

The corallum is either low and discoid, or if it is higher it is so faintly and truncately conical that the diameter of the base is not much greater than that of the shallow plane calice.

The costæ, which begin on the flat basal surface near its margin, are equal, regular and very finely granular, and are separated from one another by deep incisions.

The calice is circular and quite flat, except for a central umbilication which marks the columella.

The septa are in four cycles, of which those of the third cycle are by far the smallest, while the primary septa along with the nearest quaternary of the adjoining half-system on each side are the largest. The six large primary septa with their large quaternary on each side thus form a six-rayed star, each ray consisting of three equal segments—namely a primary septum with a quaternary on each side of it.

The septa are hardly exsert, and they resemble the costæ, with which they are continuous, in being finely and uniformly granular.

Pali, in the form of series of very small denticles, stand before the primary and secondary septa, and also before the united margins of the tertiaries and quaternaries of each half-system.

The columella is distinct and consists of contorted granules. Dredged by Professor Wood-Mason in the Andaman Sea. Every specimen, as in the case of *H. æquicostatus* and *H. philippensis*, is perforated and tunnelled in the base by a worm.

The distinctive characters of this species are (1) the circular calice almost or quite equal to the base in diameter, and not separated from the base by any constriction whatever, (2) the equivalence in size of the primary septa with the quaternaries standing immediately on each side, and (3) the small size of the pali.

DISCOTROCHUS, Edw. & Haime.

10. *Discotrochus investigatoris*, n. sp. Plate V, figs. 5. 5a.

Corallum discoid, thick and coarse. The almost horizontal base culminates in a coarse scar from which very distinct coarsely granular costæ radiate, the costæ being equally distinct throughout their course and all of uniform size.

The calice is very shallow.

The septa, which are in four cycles, are slightly exsert, with thick coarsely spinate or dentate edges: those of the first cycle are the most prominent, and those of the third cycle the least so, but the difference in size between any of the cycles is not very marked.

The columella consists of a few papillæ.

Diameter of disk 8 mm., greatest thickness 2 mm.

The single specimen was dredged by the 'Investigator' off the Arrakan Coast, and appears to be a denuded fossil.

Its possible fossil character is supported by the fact that, as Professor Wood-Mason informed me, fossil Crustacea were dredged either at or very near the same place during the same surveying season. The exact spot at which the coral was dredged was off the Islands of Rámree and Cheduba.

In relation to the possible fossil nature of this species I may refer to two papers in the *Records of the Geological Survey of India*, vol. ix. ("On the Mud Volcanoes of Rámri and Cheduba" by F. R. Mallet, F. G. S., p. 188, and "On the Mineral Resources of Rámri, Cheduba, and the adjacent Islands," by the same author, p. 207), to which my attention has been very kindly directed by Mr. T. H. Holland of the Geological Survey.

In these papers there is notice of historical evidence of the recent elevation of the land in this vicinity and along with it of much recent coral.

The rocks of this region appear from Mr. Mallet's observations to consist (1) of petroliferous shales and sandstones with nodules and strangulated beds of impure limestone and with shallow seams of lignite and coal, and (2) of minutely crystalline grey limestone,—all the strata being very irregular and being generally steeply inclined: as regards age the conclusion appears to be that they are Eocene Tertiary (Nummulitic) though the possibility is noted that some may be Cretaceous.

POLYCYATHUS, Duncan.

12. *Polycyathus andamanensis*, n. sp. Pl. V, figs. 6. 6a.

The colony is large enough to cover a *Conus* shell, 70 mm. in length, with a thin spongy crust. The corallites are small, very short, cylindrical, and are placed close together.

The costæ are distinct from the basal encrustment upwards, are alternately salient, and are usually covered with a white, vitreous epitheca.

The calices are open, shallow, and either circular or slightly elliptical. The septa, which are in four nearly complete cycles, are slightly and irregularly exsert: they are nearly equal in size and are coarsely granular.

The pali, which are in the form of strong denticulations, are distinct before all the septa.

The small deep-seated columella consists of a few small close papillæ.

The height of the corallites ranges from 2 to 3 mm., and the diameter of their calice from 3 to 7 mm.

The encrusting base and the epitheca are of a porcelain white, as are the tips of the septa; the calice wall, the septa, pali and columella being of a purple-black colour.

Dredged in the Andaman Sea by Professor Wood-Mason.

FAMILY OCULINIDÆ.

LOPHOHELIA, Edw. & Haime.

11. *Lophohelia*, sp.

Several dead branches of a species so eroded as not to be exactly determinable were dredged by the "Investigator" off the Konkan Coast in 446 fathoms.

I mention it as being the first observed occurrence of this family in Indian waters.

FAMILY EUPSAMMIDÆ.

BALANOPHYLLIA, Searles Wood, Duncan.

13. *Balanophyllia scabra*, n. sp. Pl. V, figs. 7. 7a.

Corallum simple, large, stoutly pedunculate, and gradually expanding, with a slight curve, into an elliptical calice.

The costæ, which are distinct from the base, are equal in size, uniform, and closely and conspicuously dentate.

The elliptical calice is deep.

The septa, which are crowded and very thin, are in five cycles, of which the last is not complete. Those of the first and second cycles are of equal predominant size and are slightly exsert. The quaternaries, especially those immediately adjoining the large septa of the first and second cycles, are larger than the ternaries, and unite with them not far from the columella. In those quarter-systems in which a fifth cycle of septa is developed these unite with the septa of the fourth cycle not far below the calicular margin, and the quinary nearest the large septa of the first and second cycles becomes the largest of the united triad. The edges of all the septa except those of the two first cycles are either ragged or cut into deep serrations, the teeth nearest the columella standing upwards like pali.

The columella is well-developed, spongy, and either plane or concave.

In the type specimen the greatest height of the corallum is 26 mm., the major diameter of the calice 21 mm., and the minor diameter 15 mm.

Dredged by Professor Wood-Mason in the Andaman Sea.

EUPSAMMIA, Edw. & Haime.

14. *Eupsammia regalis*, n. sp. Pl. V, figs. 8., 8a.

Corallum simple, free with traces of former adhesion, curved, conuate, compressed.

Costæ distinct in the upper two-thirds of the corallum, occasionally trifurcating, united at regular intervals across the deepish intercostal incisions by horizontal spicules.

Calice elliptical with the major marginal axis on a slightly lower plane than the minor, deep, open.

The septa are in five cycles, of which the last is not complete, and are exsert. Those of the first two cycles are of equally predominant size and stoutness, while those of the other cycles are smaller and diminish in size in order, except that in the quarter-systems in which a fifth cycle is developed the quinary septum immediately adjoining the primary is larger than its neighbour of the fourth cycle.

The quinaries unite with the quaternaries much nearer to the columella than to the calicular margin, and close to the columella the quaternaries unite with the tertiaries.

All the septa are thick, spongy and perforate at their exsert tips and near the wall of the calice, but they soon become thin and dense with surfaces so finely granular as to appear quite smooth to the naked eye.

The columella is broad, spongy, and strongly convex.

The colour of the corallum is white, of the soft parts bright scarlet.

The greatest height of the corallum is 27·5 mm., the major diameter of the calice 25 mm., and the minor diameter 17·5 mm.

Dredged by the "Investigator," off Ceylon, in 32 fathoms.

HETEROPSAMMIA, Edw. & Haime.

15. *Heteropsammia geminata*, Verrill.

Heteropsammia geminata, Verrill, American Journal of Science and Arts, second series, vol. xlix. 1870, p. 370. fig. 1.

About two hundred and fifty specimens were dredged by Professor Wood-Mason in the Andaman Sea. All have the base perforated and tunnelled.

16. *Heteropsammia rotundata*, Semper.

Heteropsammia rotundata, Semper, Zeitschr. Wiss. Zool., vol. xxii. 1870, p. 265, taf. xx, fig. 10.

I refer to this species several specimens from the Persian Gulf presented by Mr. W. T. Blandford, F.R.S.

17. *Heteropsammia aphrodes*, n. sp. Pl. V, figs. 9, 9a. Near *Heteropsammia ovalis*, Semper.

Corallum with a single calice, the wall formed of a fine lace-like reticulum (not spongy as in other species).

Calice oval and deep, its major diameter being not much less than that of the base—the basal "spur" excluded.

Septa in four beautifully regular and complete cycles. Those of the first two cycles are of equally predominant size, are exsert, and are very thick, inflated, spongy, and porose, even up to their edges. Those of the fourth cycle are rather larger than those of the third, and unite in front of them, with beautiful symmetry, near the columella.

The deeply seated columella is well developed, and is slightly concave.

The greatest height of an average corallum is 10 mm., with a calice having a major diameter of 10 mm., and a minor diameter of 8 mm.

Numerous living specimens were dredged by the "Investigator" off the Ganjam Coast, at a depth of 20–25 fathoms, and every one of them was provided with a commensal Sipunculoid worm.

With specimens kept alive for a short time on board it was observed that the worm was able to propel the coral in a rapid series of short jerky spiral movements.

The movements were performed with great ease, and there appears to be little doubt that we have here to do with a true case of commensalism, in which the worm serves the polyp as a locomotive agent, while the polyp affords particularly effectual protection—owing to its power of urtication—to the worm. As Professors Moseley and Semper observed in their species of *Heteropsammia*, the worm lives in a tunnel hollowed out of the coral-tissue, and no traces of any adventitious shell can be discovered forming a core.

In addition to the aperture for the exit of the worm, which is found in a special spur-like process of the base of the corallum, the side of the corallum about half way up is ringed with small punctures. Similar punctures are found in the coralla of other species of *Heteropsammia* and also *Heterocyathus*, and Professor Moseley regarded them as respiratory apertures for the use of the commensal worm.

DENDROPHYLLIA, Edw. & Haime.

18. *Dendrophyllia* sp.

From the Orissa Coast, at 10 fathoms, we have a bush-shaped colony of long slender cylindrical corallites resembling *Dendrophyllia gracilis*, Edw. & Haime, in all respects except in the form of the columella which is very strongly convex, in some cases almost styliiform, instead of being plane.

CÆNOPSAMMIA, Edw. & Haime.

19. *Cænopsammia* sp.

From the Arrakan, Orissa and Ganjam Coasts respectively, we have three species of *Cænopsammia* of the type of *C. urvillii*, Edw. & Haime, the colonies being in massive tufts from which the units of the colony project little or not at all.

I consider it better not to name any of these species until we have more material for comparison.

RHODOPSAMMIA, Semper.

20. *Rhodopsammia carinata*, Semper.

Rhodopsammia carinata, Semper, Zeitschr. Wiss. Zool., vol. xxii. 1872, p. 257, taf. xix. fig. 6.

Numerous specimens were dredged by Professor Wood-Mason in the Andaman Sea, and by the "Investigator" off Ceylon in 32 fathoms. The gemmation from the calicular margin is well seen in both series of specimens.

21. *Rhodopsammia socialis*, Semper.*Rhodopsammia socialis*, Semper, tom. cit., p. 260, taf. xx. fig. 1-14.

Several specimens were dredged along with *R. carinata*, both in the Andaman Sea and off Ceylon. Among them is a specimen showing budding to the third generation.

FAMILY FUNGIDÆ.

CYCLOSERIS Edw. & Haime.

22. *Cycloseris mycoides*, n. sp. Pl. V, fig. 10.

Corallum almost circular, gently convex, with a flat or slightly concave base, from the centre of which close-set, equidistant, alternately, unequal costæ radiate—the larger ones being finely lamellar, while the alternate smaller ones are composed of a single series of fine granules.

The septa, which are in seven very regular and complete cycles, are close-set and convex, with very finely and evenly denticulate edges and very finely and striately granular surfaces. Those of the first two cycles are of equally predominant size and touch the columella, while those of the last two cycles do not reach half-way to the columella. Those of the fifth cycle unite together in each quarter-system in front of their quaternary, the united pairs then showing a tendency to further unite in each half-system in front of their tertiary.

The central fossa is long, narrow, and moderately deep, and lodges a narrow loosely reticulate columella.

The synapticulæ are numerous and coarse.

In an average specimen the major diameter of the corallum is 23.5 mm., and the minor diameter 23 mm.

Dredged by Professor Wood-Mason in the Andaman Sea.

This species differs from *Cycloseris cyclolites*, with which I have compared it, in the much greater delicacy regularity and symmetry of all its parts: it appears to be near *Cycloseris sinensis*, Edw. & H., and *Cycloseris discus*, Quelch.

DIASERIS, Edw. & Haime.

23. *Diaseris distorta*, Edw. & Haime.

Diaseris distorta, Milne Edwards and Haime, Hist. Nat. des Corall., vol. iii. p. 55, pl. D. 12, fig. 4.

Several specimens were dredged by Professor Wood-Mason in the Andaman Sea.

24. *Diaseris freycineti*, Edw. & Haime.

Diaseris freycineti, Milne-Edwards and Haime, Hist. Nat. des Corall., vol. iii. p. 55; and Semper, Zeitschr. Wiss. Zool., vol. xxii, 1872, p. 269, taf. xxi. fig. 1.

Several specimens dredged by Professor Wood-Mason in the Andaman Sea. In all the specimens, except two very young ones, the corallum is tunnelled apparently by a worm, just as in *Heterocyathus* and *Heteropsammia*, except that the aperture for the exit of the worm instead of being on the base is at one side of the oral fossa.

Before going on to describe a new species of the genus *Diaseris*, I must here remark that our beautiful series of *Diaseris freycineti*, and of the species about to be described do not support Mr. Quelch's opinion that the species of *Diaseris* are merely the results of the fracture and repair of *Cycloseris*.

25. *Diaseris fragilis*, n. sp. Pl. V, fig. 11.

The corallum is flat and very thin. In its youngest stage the corallum is almost circular with a triangular lobe breaking through an arc of about 90° of its circumference and projecting to form a sector of a much larger circle.

This lobe appears with age to spread round the original disk until this in turn becomes a small lobe occupying not much more than 50° of the circumference of the grown coral.

The full-grown coral forms an irregular ellipse divided into four lobes in opposite pairs, one pair being large (each lobe with a margin equal to about 180° of the entire circumference), and the other pair being small (each lobe with a margin extending through about 55° of the entire circumference). The lobes are very distinctly delimited up to the very centre of the corallum, which has the appearance of being composed of four artificially cemented pieces.

The costæ are in the form of very close delicate granular striations, alternately unequal.

The septa, which appear to be in eight cycles in six irregular systems, are thin with very finely and evenly serrate edges and granular surfaces: they are usually low, but the primaries and secondaries are unequally elevated near the fossa.

The synapticulæ near the centre are coarse, close and equidistant, and form regularly concentric circles, as in *Bathyactis*, throughout the interseptal chambers: near the margin they are much more delicate, and are not equidistant.

The fossa is conspicuous and a columella is usually absent, although sometimes a few distant papillæ are visible.

The largest specimen measures 50 mm. in the major diameter and 41 mm. in the minor and is not more than 6.5 mm. in height to the tip of the highest septum.

Dredged in the Andaman Sea by Professor Wood-Mason.

BATHYACTIS, Moseley.

26. *Bathyactis stephanus*, n. sp. Pl. V, figs. 12, 12a.

Corallum very thin and fragile, circular, strongly convex, the base forming an inverted bowl. The costæ radiate from the centre and gradually become laminar or crested as they approach the margin: the primaries are the most distinct.

Septa in six regular systems and five complete cycles arranged exactly as in *Bathyactis symmetrica*. Those of the first three cycles are foliaceous, with crenulated surfaces and irregularly lobate edges.

Synapticulæ distinct in ten to twelve zones, which though fairly regularly concentric do not at once attract the eye by this character as they do in *Bathyactis symmetrica*. Columella distinct, umbilicated.

Diameter of corallum 34 mm., its greatest height from margin of base to the tips of the tallest foliaceous primary septa 17 mm.

The colour of the soft parts is a ruddy mauve.

Four specimens from the Bay of Bengal off the Kistna Delta in 678 fathoms.

EXPLANATION OF THE PLATE.

- Figs. 1, 1a, *Paracyathus cavatus*, natural size;
 Figs. 2, 2a, *Paracyathus fulvus*, natural size;
 Figs. 3, 3a, *Paracyathus porphyreus*, natural size;
 Figs. 4, 4a, *Heterocyathus wood-masoni*, natural size;
 Figs. 5, 5a, *Discotrochus investigatoris*, enlarged five times;
 Figs. 6, 6a, *Polycyathus andamanensis*, natural size;
 Figs. 7, 7a, *Balanophyllia scabra*, natural size;
 Figs. 8, 8a, *Eupsammia regalis*, natural size;
 Fig. 9, *Heteropsammia aphrodes*, natural size; and 9a, viewed from above, enlarged twice;
 Fig. 10, *Cycloseris mycoides*, natural size;
 Fig. 11, *Diaseris fragilis*, natural size;
 Figs. 12, 12a, *Bathyactis stephanus*, natural size.